

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7298

INFO AMCONSUL CALI

AMCONSUL MEDELLIN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BOGOTA 1898

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PDIB CO

SUBJ: BIOGRAPHIC INFO: EDUARDO SANTOS GOMEZ

REF: AMB VAKY-MAISTO TELECON FEB 24

1. THE COLOMBIAN FONOFF HAS NO BIO DATA ON SANTOS FOR RELEASE. MOST OF THE FOL INFO WAS SUPPLIED BY AN EMBASSY OFFICER WHO KNOWS SANTOS WELL.

2. EDUARDO SANTOS GOMEZ, WHO WAS RECENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE COLOMBIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. SANTOS HOLDS THE TITLE OF COUNSELOR. HE IS NOT A CAREER DIPLOMAT, BUT IS AN ECONOMIST BY TRAINING AND PRACTICE.

3. SANTOS' GRANDFATHER WAS THE FOUNDER OF EL TIEMPO, THE COUNTRY'S PRINCIPLE NEWSPAPER. HE IS THE NEPHEW OF FORMER COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT SANTOS. A BACHELOR IN HIS LATE THIRTIES, SANTOS HAS SPENT A GREAT DEAL OF HIS LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES, FIRST AS A STUDENT IN PREP SCHOOL AND LATER AS A STUDENT AT NOTRE DAME AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN. WHILE AT NOTRE DAME HE KNEW EUGENE KOPP, WHO IS DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF USIA. AS A STUDENT SANTOS DEVELOPED AN UNDISGUISED FONDNESS FOR THE US AND LEARNED TO DEAL EFFECTIVELY WITH AMERICANS IN THEIR OWN SURROUNDINGS.

4. DURING THE EARLY SIXTIES EDUARDO SANTOS WAS A MEMBER OF THE FIRM "PIDELTA", THEN LATER TOOK A FINANCIAL POSITION IN THE

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CHRYSLER-OWNED AND BOGOTA-BASED "COLMOTORES". IN 1970, DURING

THE LAST MONTHS OF CARLOS LLERAS' GOVERNMENT, SANTOS, WHO COUNTS HIMSELF A MEMBER OF THE LIBERAL PARTY, SERVED AS THE PRESIDENT'S SECRETARY (PERSONAL ADVISOR) FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. MORE RECENTLY, SANTOS HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF "SIDER-URIGICA DE BOYACA", ONE OF COLOMBIA'S PRINCIPAL STEEL COMPANIES. OVER THE YEARS SANTOS HAS BEEN A CONTRIBUTOR OF ARTICLES ON ECONOMIC MATTERS TO THE NEWSPAPER EL TIEMPO. PRIOR TO ACCEPTING THE DIPLOMATIC POSITION IN WASHINGTON, SANTOS WAS REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING WITH AN UNNAMED AMERICAN BANK FOR A POSITION IN ITS NEW YORK OFFICE.

5. AMEMB OFFICERS IN BOGOTA ARE FAVORABLY IMPRESSED WITH SANTOS. HE HAS A WARM PERSONALITY AND IS ENGAGING BI-LINGUAL CONVERSATIONIST. SANTOS IS A KNOWLEDGEABLE ECONOMIST WITH A STRONG BACKGROUND IN HIS FIELD. HE ENJOYS TENNIS AND IS AN AVID READER. HE DRINKS MODERATELY DURING SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

6. PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR THE US, SANTOS CONFIDED TO AN EMB- OFF THAT PRESIDENT LOPEZ PERSONALLY REQUESTED HIM TO TAKE THE DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN WASHINGTON. KNOWN TO BE A LOYAL "LOPISTA", SANTOS MAY HAVE BEEN CHOSEN FOR THE WASHINGTON POSITION IN ORDER TO KEEP AN EYE ON JULIO CESAR TURBAY, THE RECENTLY NAMED COLOMBIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE US AND LONG-TIME POLITICAL COMPETITOR OF THE PRESIDENT.

7. SANTOS GAVE US TO UNDERSTAND THAT HE WOULD GO TO WASHINGTON AS THE NUMBER TWO MAN IN THE EMBASSY. IT WAS, THEREFORE, WITH SOME SURPRISE THAT WE LEARNED THAT HE IS IN FACT CONSIDERABLY FURTHER DOWN ON THE LIST.  
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